1: Lowie E-5 (1926) 1939 NT20 Washo NT20

II. SOCIAL LIFE

Government—Property

Settlements were minute: Jack recalled none with as many as ten huts; usually there were from two to four. As a child he lived with his parents and maternal grandparents; the neighbors, about thirty feet away, were not kin. 361

Though Bill spoke of Captain Jim as chief (tc.upe"yu) of all the Washo, this was probably a recent development. Bill could not say whether Jim had inherited the office from his father. When the "captain" went to Washington, D.C., he took with him as assistant Dick Bender, who had been to the Indian School in Carson and spoke fair English. It is not clear that Jim and Dick were related, but both were p'alaa"ei (see below). 622 [648] [871] [614]

The chief had nothing to do with fighting enemies or adjusting quarrels within the tribe; his sole function was to arrange dances and other gatherings, where he would exhort the Washo to be good (Dave, Bill). Jack's notion of a typical speech follows:[1] 622 183 535 574 [692] [726] [537] [539]

Behave well, do not fight, play! If you lose, do not get angry. Play ball; some win, others lose. Play the basket game. Shoot rabbits, eat them. Make soup and eat it. After a while, shoot deer. Shoot grouse, sage hen, mountain quail, ground hogs, ground squirrels, meadow squirrels, small squirrels, mice. Go and hunt antelope and mountain sheep. Spear fish!

Daisy Bender and Big Susie gave this version of one of Captain Jim's speeches:[2] [537] [539]

Dance! Interlocking your fingers, dance! Husbands, interlock fingers, now with interlocking fingers dance! Dance! Then dance with your wives. Behave properly! Don't fight. Dance with your wives, make your wives sleep well.

Special headmen led in hunting jack rabbits, deer, and antelope, respectively. The antelope headman dreamed the right to office; the two others were purely secular leaders, the rabbit chief, according to Dave, being chosen by the people. 624 224

Property rights were maintained for clumps of pine-nut trees, patches being marked off by lines of rocks. Bill's patch was west of Double Spring, he and his brother, Charlie Buell, having inherited from their father. Bill's mother claimed clumps west of Mountain House, some falling to my informant's share. Sally, his sister, might properly have claimed part, but did not do so. Brothers never quarreled over pine-nut privileges; and if they had plenty, they would allow a married sister to pick from their tract. On the other hand, trespass by a stranger was resented, the owner rebuking him with such words as, "Don't pick pine nuts here! They are not yours, but mine." This might even lead to fighting. Mrs. Hardy, the postmistress of Coleville (in 1926), told me that the Indians meticulously respected one another's claims. Dave's father and paternal uncle owned four patches, of which Dave inherited one. A thief's pole was sometimes broken up by the rightful owner of a patch. 423 [578] 423 685 [609] [571] [428]

[1] Recorded in Washo. [2] Recorded in Washo.

1: Lowie E-5 (1926) 1939 NT20 Washo NT20

hunting, killed a deer, squirrel, or what not, and, delivering the following speech (Bill), gave his wife to eat:

> This time we are going to eat. This woman for a long time has not eaten meat. I am going to feed her. You, Washo, here you will cook it. Anything I find I'll feed the woman. All of you, you will cook. Cook, you will bring it here, then we'll all eat.

The husband shared his wife's fast only for the first two or three days after the birth, being subsequently free to eat anything. The mother did not drink any cold water after the delivery lest "it should kill her quickly."

According to Dave, no man was allowed near the woman in confinement. The navel cord was cut with a wooden knife as sharp as a razor. After the delivery the mother drank a sugar-pine potion "to make the blood come out." The father had to stay away; after the child's birth he bathed in a creek lest the baby die. He also gave some man a buckskin, which helped keep disease away from the infant. The mother stayed at home for about ten days; her month's meat fast was "in order not to raise up the blood again." A woman who had given birth to four children no longer observed this taboo (Jack).

People liked twins and sometimes laughed at one of them, saying, "That man does more work than others" (because he is double).

Barrett[1] reports that cradles were decorated differently in accordance with the infant's sex. This agrees with Paviotso data, but was not confirmed by Bill for the Washo.

After four or five months, an infant was put into a bigger and stronger cradle (Dave).

NAMES

Children were not named until old enough to talk. A child's funny saying led to a corresponding name, retained in later life. Jack was thus called A'abi, which has no meaning. Boys and girls bore the same kind of name. This custom of name giving has been abandoned altogether.

EDUCATION

The Washo did not strike naughty children, but merely talked to them. A father would make a little bow and arrows for his son and teach him to shoot squirrels. Stories were told only at night, when a boy might ask an old man to tell him a story, the elder answering, "Lie down, I'll talk to you." At last the child would fall asleep.

ADOPTION

A barren woman sometimes adopted her cousin's child and kept it for good. If a woman died in childbirth, her mother took care of the infant. A man who took a fancy to a little boy sometimes desired to have him for a son and married the mother.

PUBERTY

The most important dance was the girls' puberty ceremony, t'ewi'we. It was the only one witnessed by Bill. He said it was still common in Carson Valley, but had been discontinued in Antelope Valley for lack of girls. T'ewi'we and

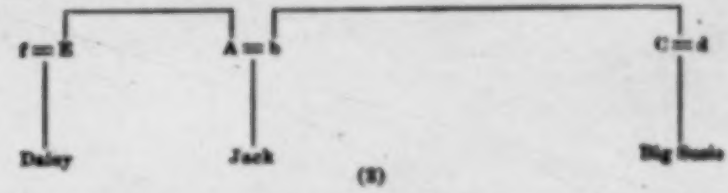
[1] *Op. cit.*, 21.

1: Lowie E-5 (1926) 1939 NT20 Washo NT20

601 Bill calls McCarty's wife la'yus; she calls Bill and his wife la'yuk, which is what Bill's wife called Bill's mother.

Ray calls his mother's father ti.e'ld, and is called la'ldi in turn. He calls his father's mother ti'a'ma and is called la'a'ma in turn. Bill pointed out that this was "the same word, you know."

Ray calls his maternal grandmother tika'a, and she calls "back to him" leka'l.



(E)

Jack calls C tita'a, Big Susie and Daisy tiwi'tauk, and E ti.e'.aui. Jack would call the children of either maternal or paternal aunts by sibling terms.

Jack confirmed Bill's statement that the father's sister's husband was not a relative, and said the reciprocal term was also lacking. It was possible to say descriptively tiya' pumu'li, my paternal aunt's husband. Similarly, the mother's brother's wife was no relative but might be called tita'a tamlal'ya, my maternal uncle's wife. The wife's brother's wife and wife's brother's child remained undesignated.

Jack said the wife's sister was descriptively designated as timlal'ya tawi'tauk. There was no term for a man's stepson, nor a reciprocal.

Jack gave the descriptive expression tipe'ya tasu'mu, my younger brother's daughter.

Dances

535 The t'ewe'we has already been described (p. 306), and the tendency to confuse it and the gale'e was noted. Bill mentioned a "war dance" he had seen as a little boy in Alpine County. There were from forty to fifty performers, many of [534] them holding arrows. One old man sang, the others taking up the tune. There was no drum. Only men took part.

[177] [178] Dave referred to a me'luwe'uc dance (old men lively? dance) called "love dance" by the whites. It was not practiced by the Paviotso. The Washo had learned it from the Pit River Indians, but the only group sharing it were the Diggua Indians southward toward Redding. One man in it performed something like a war dance. Wearing a headband with a short and a long eagletail feather standing up in the back, he moved about rapidly so as to make the feathers wiggle. Holding a *foxskin* in his hand, he would bend down to put it between his legs, then waved it around his head with his left hand and uttered a purring noise. Then he would stop and thus address his fellow dancers: "This is the way we all do, that I am showing you. Old persons this way, young people, I am showing you, that's the way I do. That's the way the Indians did before the whites. You, young people, think that's the way. Boys and girls, I'll show you well, do this way."

At major gatherings, dances were held within the horseshoe-shaped area formed by the camping patrilineal subdivisions of the tribe (p. 304). The [537] chief's speech on such occasions has been cited (p. 303). Admonitory addresses were popular, and probably not restricted to the chief; at all events, several

1: Lowie E-5 (1926) 1939 NT20 Washo NT20

versions were recorded in Washo, all urging the people to amuse themselves and refrain from fighting and troublesome conduct.

A dance borrowed from the Paviotso was described as follows. Early in the spring a Paviotso chief calls his Indians to dance. "Dance for everything to come up pretty well in growth. Frost and storm, stop and do not kill the blossoms. Whenever pine nuts grow, let them be big burrs with plenty of nuts. May no worms get in." He took off one burr, put a little medicine on it, painted the burr, and made a hole for storing the nuts, so they would not be dry and so there would be plenty. The Washo heard about this from the Paviotso and did likewise.

Some Washo, of his own accord, would arrange a festive gathering at any season of the year, two or three men conferring about getting the food together. One man would sing, and others circled about, taking up his song. Sometimes women stepped between two men. Hand holding was called gabalo'epa. Sometimes they danced for five or six consecutive nights. The gathering was also an occasion for foot races, football, and hand games.

Games

The athletic games included football (palo'yapi teli"liwa palo'yap), the hoop-and-pole game, archery, and the women's shinny (tsigai'yaga). In pure gambling there were the hand game (hinai'yaya, hinaiya'ukia), another hiding game (tso'tsoyi), and a women's dice game.

Football players, youths of 17 or 18 able to run fast, stripped to their gee strings. Dave agrees with Hudson[m] that each side was composed of 3 men and that goals consisted of 2 sticks. Hudson describes these as 10 feet high and about 4 feet apart, the field being about 300 feet long; Dave spoke of uprights about 15 feet high and not connected by a crossbar. One player—according to Hudson, the captain in the center of the field—threw the ball up, and then it was kicked toward the base. The ball (ko'mol) was 6 inches in diameter and filled with the inner bark of sagebrush (Hudson). Men of complementary patrilineal groups played against each other (p. 304).

In pehu"a, two pairs of men tested their skill in archery, the players shooting at a willow stick with bark removed. They measured which arrow came closest to the stick; striking it in the middle scored 4, and 15 points won the game. There was no cheating. All the Indians would look on. (Dave.)

In another archery contest ("tsuhotumpeah," Hudson), an arrow was planted in a position slanting toward the marksman, who from a distance of sixty feet threw a blunt three-foot arrow at it. Opponents took turns in trying either to strike the leaning arrow or to knock away the opponents' missile. Either of these feats counted 1, and dislodging the target scored 5. Several could play, each with a stipulated number of darts.

Hudson[n] describes two forms of hoop-and-pole game (pululpai'yayapu, pululpaiyapa) not mentioned by my informants. In the first, one player rapidly rolled a willow hoop twelve inches in diameter past his opponent, who

[m] Culin, *op. cit.*, 704. [n] *Ibid.*, p. 286. [o] *Ibid.*, 322.

1: Lowie E-5 (1926) 1939 NT20 Washo NT20

The corral (mo'dap) is about an acre in size, with a chute leading to the entrance. Sagebrush is piled so high that the antelope cannot jump out. The men go to drive the antelope in. The chief stands just back of the corral, smoking his pipe. He says, "I'll stay home behind the corral. If I dreamt right, you'll drive them in and we'll kill them. If they get scared at you fellows, we can't help it; but I think we'll kill them easily in the corral." When the antelope are near, he says to the beasts, "Don't get scared, come on easily now, don't get discouraged, listen to my words. We are making a home for you, you have come a great way." The antelope stop and look toward him. They are not afraid at all, but keep quiet, like sheep driven into a pen. Instead of scattering, they come into the sagebrush pen. He says to the people, "When I tell you, then is the time to shout." When all are in the pen, the people close up, and the chief bids them commence killing. They use their bows and arrows, and some hit the game over the head with clubs. The chief says, "My people, look at them, kill the biggest in the whole herd, I'll have that one." They kill it and give it to the chief. Of the rest, three or four men will share one animal. They like it, cut up the meat, cook and eat it right there. First the chief says, "I dreamt antelope for you, I got the best one, I am satisfied." Nobody eats while he is speaking. Then they divide the spoils, pack the game home, and have plenty that night. The corral is left standing.

Dave gave the following texts of speeches delivered by the Antelope chief to the game and hunters respectively:

(a)

kalo'kaew ai'yus, kehamo'moyam, kepi"cuk, kapa"cuk ma'yala. kalo'kaco'sa, ma'yal keho'le, latamale"wa . . . kula'kta."

(Do not get scared, antelope, come easily, creep up, come right into your home. Don't be afraid. We made your home, listen to me . . . don't get scared of anybody.)

(b)

wa'die kaya'tuka'ya, kaya'tuk temesul i'ke li'cul. wi'kin le"doc kime"kayaktok i'ke ke'su, t'aiyaqa ga'mayoca. mi"le ke'wa temi'ku. gaya'cu a"ai. hak tikumso"cie i'ke mikla a'"caiya. kiki"kst a'yam k'vicke tiya'mle. i'ke laye.leye's nake' akna.ite's heliki ke'le wadive'se"lqa. i'ke mi"'ya, i'ke le'sic kutina'ya hat'a"oya untamale's-heliki le'sic.

(Now begin killing, kill the biggest buck, that give to me. That's all I tell you. Kill for yourselves, that have for your own meat. Guts, however, do not throw away, eat everything. Wash off the guts. Thus I dreamt, that I have told you all. This good thing that way I tell you. There is no one else who could tell you about this today. This is good for you. If I were dead, from no one else here you would be able to hear this, I think, if I were dead.)

" This last word is spoken when all the antelope get into the pen.

7:Freed B-S (1852-1917)1960 NTSU Washo NT26
[P 351, B]

p. 388), an elected official. As many as 200 Indians might take part in a rabbit drive. The rabbits were slowly driven into long nets. During the drive, they were shot with bows and arrows or killed with clubs. Those which evaded the drivers were usually trapped in the nets, where waiting Indians killed them by wringing their necks or squeezing their temples. Care had to be used not to break the net and cause bad luck for the hunters (Barrett, 1917, p. 13). Rabbits provided food, and their skins were used to make rabbitskin blankets. Rabbits have remained a rather important food for the Washo, and rabbitskin blankets are still used by a few older Washo.

Today, rabbits are hunted individually or in a kind of drive which consists of a line of men moving through the sagebrush, shooting the flushed rabbits with shotguns. Nets are no longer used. Another modern hunting method which is popular among the younger men is to shoot rabbits from an automobile.

The principal seeds used as food were acorns and pine nuts. Acorns did not grow in Washo territory. They were gathered in California and carried back in large, twined burden baskets. The acorns were shelled, pounded to flour on permanent bedrock mortars, leached with hot water, and made into soup. Another popular way to prepare acorns was to pour a thick acorn mush into cold water, thus forming jellylike balls about the size of a fist. The preparation of acorn meal by the Washo closely resembles the practices of the adjacent Californian tribes.

Pine nuts were the most important single food of the Washo. They were eaten throughout the winter and stored from year to year. The pine-nut season was preceded by a dance lasting four days. This was the largest social gathering among the Washo. During these four days, they danced, played games, and prayed for a good crop. While dancing, the Washo carried the tools used to gather and prepare pine nuts: the hooked pole, burden baskets, mano and metate, and the paddle for stirring mush. The most prominent feature of the pine-nut dance was the continual round of games and races, accompanied by heavy gambling. After the last night's dancing, the chief made a speech exhorting people to treat children and the aged with kindness and to be good to their wives. Then they bathed in a stream and scattered to their pine-nut plots (Curtis, 1926, p. 88). Pine nuts were ground to flour and made into soup.

The Washo still make considerable use of pine nuts and acorns. Most of the traditional implements used in their preparation have been retained: mortar, mano and metate, burden baskets, hooked pole, and the various winnowing baskets. Although acorns and pine nuts are widely eaten, they cannot now be considered staple items in the Washo diet, which consists largely of modern American food.

Fish were the most important summer food for the Washo. They obtained most of their fish from the streams draining into Lake Tahoe. The importance of fish in the Washo economy is indicated by the variety of fishing techniques: they could be harpooned, taken in conical traps of basketry, or captured by drives into nets or stone dams erected at suitable places in a stream. None of the aboriginal fishing techniques survive today. All fishing is with rod and line and is therefore individualistic as opposed to many of the aboriginal cooperative methods. In fishing, as in hunting, there has been a steady shift from cooperative to individual activity.

[P.352, B]

dance gave a reason for the omission, such as her attendance at a government boarding-school. In general, the ceremony is scrupulously observed. The modern ceremony is a modified version of the old one. The girl no longer climbs a mountain; she climbs a small hill. An automobile is waiting for her when she returns; she wears her slip when she is being bathed instead of being naked as was formerly the custom; she abstains from meat for only two weeks instead of a month; the second dance is usually omitted. Yet the essentials of the ceremony are maintained; and this is in the face of the teasing to which the Indian girl is exposed from her white schoolmates, for the public puberty ceremony makes her a conspicuous social object at the time of her first menses.

Marriages were celebrated with a minimum of ceremony. The most desirable Washo marriage was one arranged by the parents of the bride and groom. Such a marriage was preceded by an exchange of presents. To refuse a present was to reject the prospective bride or groom. Following the exchange of gifts, the new couple began to live together without further ceremony (Curtis, 1926, p. 97; Lowie, 1939, p. 308). The exchange of presents was optional, and occasionally a boy and girl would live together without the benefit of parental arrangements (Barrett, 1917, p. 9; Lowie, 1939, p. 308). Perhaps arranged marriages were never very frequent or else the custom began to die out very early, for in my interviews I found only two arranged marriages out of a total of forty-eight. Today, most people marry in the "tribal" manner, that is, they just begin to live together. Even those few who have purchased marriage licenses usually neglect to go to a justice of peace to complete the ceremony officially.

Curtis (1926, p. 97) says that the dead were formerly cremated. Lowie (1939, p. 310) and Barrett (1917, p. 9) confirm this but add that, by the time they studied the Washo, burial had replaced cremation. Following cremation, the Washo collected the bones of the dead person and placed them in a creek. The clothes and personal property of the deceased person were burned or hidden and the house he used was abandoned. The old men and women cut their hair and mourned for three months (Lowie, 1939, p. 310).

Modern funerals retain many Indian practices. Chief among them are the customs intended to make sure that the ghost of the dead person does not return to trouble the living. Before the body is lowered into the grave, an old man steps forward and makes a speech instructing the ghost to stay away. All of the dead person's property that can be buried is interred with him. Personal property must be destroyed, for this is the "road" by which the ghost of the dead can return and trouble the living.

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RELIGION AND CURING

The shaman was the principal religious figure. He possessed supernatural power (wegeldyu) which he received in dreams and which he learned to control during an apprenticeship of several years under an experienced shaman. A shaman could use his power either to cure sickness or to kill. Supernatural power could come from the deer, rattlesnake, "water-baby" (a small, white, manlike creature which lived in streams, springs, and lakes), bear, and eagle. The Washo call both the sources of power and the power itself wegeldyu.

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A fourth culture pattern in which ghosts play a part is the disposal of the dead. Two features of funerals are connected with the fear of ghosts. First, all the property of the dead person is destroyed and his house is torn down and the parts scattered. Second, at the time the body is cremated or buried an old man steps forward and makes a long speech in which he tells the ghost of the dead person to stay away and not bother the living. With modifications the Washo observe these customs today. Houses are no longer destroyed after a death for they are too valuable, but they are temporarily abandoned. Before the house is re-occupied it is smoked with sagebrush or juniper. Cremation is not practiced, the modern Washo bury their dead.

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Some features of child-rearing patterns are related to supernatural power and the fear of ghosts. The fact that the aged may inadvertiently bewitch people affects their relations with children. Mothers try to keep their babies out of the sight of old people who are unrelated. Pete says that to give food to a child was especially dangerous. Small children lived in the house next to Hank Pete and his wife; these children were Pete's sister's daughter's son's children, but they were not related to Pete's wife. Pete's wife never gave them anything to eat. Even older relatives could be dangerous unintentionally. Pete said they would pray to water not to make their relatives of the third descending generation sick when they gave them something to eat. Bertha Holbrook's daughter who lived with her had several young children. We spent many afternoons in Holbrook's house, but never saw any unrelated children playing with the Holbrook children. Bertha remarked that the Washo don't like to have their children going to other houses to play. She said that if her grandchildren do go to other houses, she likes to go with them to make them behave. Although she never spoke of the fear of old people as a factor in children's visiting patterns, we think that this fear may be the reason children play chiefly with relatives.

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Another feature of Washo child rearing is that parents seldom physically punish their children. Hank Pete explains that if a person beat his child a dead relative of the child, through the other parent, might become angry and kill the child. Then the child would become a ghost and kill his parent. Pete told a story of a family fight in which a man treated his son very roughly. The son took sick and a shaman diagnosed the trouble as being caused by the anger of the boy's dead relatives. The boy died; then the man sickened and he too died because the ghost of the child killed him. No other Washo ever volunteered this explanation. However, we once asked Rupert if he had ever handled a case like this. He said he had not, but that he had heard of such cases from older people and he confirmed Pete's explanation.

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Hunting is another culture pattern in which supernatural power is involved. Such power is used only in deer and antelope hunting. One use is